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INFO RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 8267
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 3115
RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 2195
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 6041
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RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 5860
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2456
RUEUITH/DET 1 39LG ANKARA TU
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DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
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TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [TU](#)
SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
FRIDAY, AUGUST 3, 2007

In Today's Papers

Speculation on Presidency Continues

All papers report CHP leader Deniz Baykal called on the AKP to nominate a presidential candidate who would be approved by all parties, warning that otherwise the Turkish people could be distressed again. Islamist-oriented Zaman criticizes Baykal for displaying no change in attitude since the presidential crisis in April. Mainstream Vatan reports MHP sources as claiming Gul will announce Monday his withdrawal from the race, the sources stressing that the AKP does not want fresh tensions with the military. The paper says Defense Minister Vecdi Gonul is the AKP candidate for the top job. Mainstream Hurriyet quotes unidentified AKP sources as saying that Gul will not become parliament speaker if he decides to pullout of the presidential race, but will keep the post of Foreign Minister. The Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak says in a commentary that in their hours-long meeting on Wednesday, the AKP leaders Erdogan, Bulent Arinc, and Gul have decided to follow the "Omerta" rule and will not talk to the press on the matter.

CHP Report Blames All but the Party for Election Defeat

All papers report CHP has refrained from self-criticism in a report evaluating the results of the July 22 elections. The report says the AKP victory in the elections came about because of the support of the EU and the US for the AKP, religious sects and imams as well as the "bribes" offered to voters by AKP municipalities. Those who want a "second republic" in Turkey are very influential in the media and they have influenced the public with their brainwashing efforts, the CHP report says. It claims religious sects, which are gaining ground in Turkish state institutions, business life, education and media, supported the AKP. It says in eastern and southeastern Turkey, the AKP deceived voters with confusing messages on the fight against terror. The AKP has also not hesitated to exploit the religious feelings of voters, according to the report.

Novak Voices Opposition to US-Turkey Action against the PKK

All papers report The Washington Post columnist Robert Novak confirmed at the Heritage Foundation on Thursday that the

information featured in his recent column about a "secret" Capitol Hill briefing on possible US-Turkey joint operations against the PKK came from a Congressman who was against the idea. Novak reportedly said "the Congressman and I are happy if we helped prevent it; this operation had no relation to US security." Papers report when asked if he realized this had angered the Turks, Novak said, "It depends whose side you are on. A terrorist to some can be a freedom fighter to others."

Editorial Commentary on Possible US-Turkey Operations against the PKK

Hasan Mesut Hazar writes in the conservative daily *Turkiye*: "The stories in the American press about a joint US-Turkish operation against the PKK were distorted and sensationalized by the Turkish press. First of all, taking joint steps against the PKK is not a brand new project and the two countries have long been talking about it. The special envoy mechanism has led to some important developments. However, the challenges faced by the US in Iraq are making things even more difficult and are preventing the US from taking fast action. However, the unfulfilled promises regarding the fight against the PKK presence in Iraq have caused severe disappointment in Turkey. This inaction is the main reason for growing anti-Americanism in Turkey; and also sets a bad example in the broader context of the global fight against terrorism. The US has taken positive steps against the PKK, including efforts to cut off financial links and a successful push to get both NATO and the EU to recognize the PKK as a terrorist organization. Yet, the essence of the problem stems from the fact that Northern Iraq is still a shelter for terrorists and they continue their attacks on Turkey from there. Eventually, this issue will be solved and drop from the Turkish-American agenda because a solution not only serves Turkish and American interests, it enhances both regional and world

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peace. During this process, Turkey has to revise its policy, be cool and be realistic. Turkey can't turn its back on Iraqi Kurds, and it must not be carried away by provocative nationalist sentiments."

Mustafa Balbay writes in the nationalist-leftist daily *Cumhuriyet*: "The recent story about a secret operation by the US against the PKK is a comedy because the US reportedly is very upset following the leak of this plan to the press. Are we supposed to believe that such secret plans to fight terrorism are presented to Congress before taking action? The fact of the matter is that the US cannot take any action anywhere in Iraq that might upset the Iraqi Kurds. What we see today is a game played by the US: Trying to be nice to Kurds while also trying to make it look to Turks as if the US is really fighting against terrorism."

US-Sought Ukrainian Hacker Captured in Turkey

Milliyet, *Sabah*, *Cumhuriyet*, *Radikal*, *Zaman* and others report Ukrainian hacker Maksym Yastremsky., arrested by Turkish police near Antalya, was on the US wanted list for crimes related to international hacking. Reportedly, Yastremsky has so far stolen credit card information of 50,000 to 60,000 people including 1200 Turks. Papers report the prosecutor's office and police said he had no ties with al-Qaeda, as had previously been reported by a Turkish media outlet. The Prosecutor's office said there is a 60-day period for extradition under international regulation, and the Ukrainian hacker could be handed over to the US once the investigation in Turkey as well as international formalities have been completed.

TV Highlights
NTV, 7.00 A.M.

Domestic News

- Eight PKK terrorists including a woman were killed in security operations in the eastern province of Tunceli in which three Turkish soldiers also lost their lives.

- Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, accompanied by Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari and four other ministers as well as Iraq's anti-terror envoy, will visit Turkey on August 7.

- Court of Appeals has upheld a lower court decision to drop charges against Nobel laureate novelist Orhan Pamuk who was tried for insulting Turkishness.
- Kurdish party DTP is to hold an extraordinary convention in late August or early September to elect its new chairman.

International News

- Israel is ready to discuss "fundamental issues" leading to the creation of a Palestinian state, Secretary Rice said after talks with Palestinian leader Abbas.
- Russian explorers planted their national flag on the seabed deep below the North Pole in a submersible in an effort to stake a claim to the energy riches of the Arctic.
- The war in Iraq is costing British and American taxpayers more than USD 4,000 a second.

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